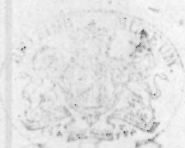


1949

LORD RUSSEL:

A
TRAGEDY.

FORD RUSSELL



TRADE MARK

LORD RUSSEL:

A

TRAGEDY.

BY THE REV. THOMAS STRATFORD, D.D.

Late Rector of GALLSTOWN, CO. WESTMEATH.

This was the noblest Roman of them all.—
He only in a general honest thought,
And common good to all, made one of them.
His life was gentle, and the elements
So mixed in him, that nature might stand up.
And cry to all the world,—this was a man.—

SHAKESPEARE

D U B L I N :

PRINTED AND SOLD FOR THE BENEFIT OF
MISS AGNES STRATFORD,
THE AUTHOR'S UNPROVIDED SISTER; TO WHOM IT WAS
BEQUEATHED, AS THE ONLY LEGACY HE HAD TO
LEAVE.

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TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

LADY KINGSBOROUGH.

MADAM,

THE untimely and much lamented death of the amiable Vice-Queen of Ireland, the late Countess of Westmorland, proves an inexhaustible source of affliction not only to her beloved Lord, her orphan children, and all her noble relatives and acquaintance, but to every being whose wretchedness, or whose sufferings, led them, as it were, by native instinct, for compassion and relief to the shrine of her tender and benevolent virtues. Among the many others who flocked to this source of comfort, I, in my griefs, approached the healing fountain, and tremblingly laid at the feet of goodness the only offering in my power, the following performance, the last legacy of a dying Brother; who, altho' distinguished by royal bounty, and literary eminence, at his death had nothing more to bequeath a destitute and unprovided Sister.—I was not rejected from her countenance.—I was promised

promised the Protection of benign Excellence; but envious fate soon—too soon, robbed me and a thousand others of that benevolence which was the protecting shield of the forlorn, the widow, and the orphan.

What was I to do?—whither to fly for succour? I could not long hesitate. I immediately directed my weeping Eyes to another bright object, the pure spring of comfort. I threw me at thy feet, and told my saddening tale. You felt it—with a heart of feeling Benevolence itself you felt it.—You bid me rise, and, with angelic benignity beaming on your countenance to cheer me, you bid me receive all the comfort you could bestow.—Great was that all indeed in my account; and may angels in the bright realm of Glory reward thee for thy bounteous to forlorn me.

I now lay before you, Madam, according to your permission, the Tragedy of Lord Ruffel; and send it into the world under your kind and goodness powerful protection; and beg leave to subscribe myself,

M A D A M,

Your most grateful

And ever devoted servant,

AGNES STRATFORD.

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THIS Tragedy was for the first time performed, by Command of his Majesty, at the Theatre Royal, Drury-lane, on the 27th of August, 1784; and successively for some nights afterwards by Gentlemen, and one Lady.

For the first night the Parts were thus cast :
King Charles the 2d.—Capt. Harriett, of the Navy.

James, Duke of York—Mr. Hyanson, a Yorkshire Attorney, Brother to Mrs. M'Nally.

The Earl of Bedford—Mr. Laurence, Father of the celebrated Painter.

Lord Ruffel—Mr. Horne, of the Temple.

Algernon Sidney—another Mr. Laurence, not the Painter.

Lord Howard, of Eserick—a Mr. Supple.

Hubert, Preceptor to Lord Ruffel—Henry Lucas, Esq. (Son of the late celebrated Dr. Lucas,) who also wrote and spoke the Prologue.

Father Peters—Major Sykes.

Sir George Jefferies—a young Lawyer of the Temple.

Kirk, Lieutenant of the Tower—Mr. Elliot.

Lady Ruffel—Mrs. Batiere, who also wrote and spoke the Epilogue.

THE PERSONS REPRESENTED.

MEN.

KING CHARLES the 2d.
JAMES DUKE of YORK,
THE EARL of BEDFORD,
LORD RUSSEL,
ALGERNOON SIDNEY,
LORD HOWARD, of ESERICK,
HUBERT,
FATHER PETERS,
SIR GEORGE JEFFERIES,
LIEUTENANT of the TOWER.

WOMEN.

LADY RUSSEL,
LADY RUSSEL'S MAID.

SCENE, LONDON.

PROLOGUE.

P R O L O G U E.

WRITTEN AND SPOKEN BY HENRY LUCAS, ESQ. SON OF
THE LATE CELEBRATED DOCTOR LUCAS.

ONE hundred years since godlike Ruffel bled,
Since hoary time rain'd sorrows on the dead;
On ruffel rain'd—the brightest boast of Fame!—
And lent Eternity his glorious name!
Too proud for party, honor all his pride,
He liv'd for England, and for England dy'd!
Thus Chatham, by no dog-star faction fir'd,
Triumphant in his Country's arms expir'd!
Our Sun extinguish'd, Terror shook the ball,
And Heav'n refounded at her Hero's fall!
Tho' truth pour'd golden light along the years,
And thron'd her Martyr high o'er all his peers,
Black rancour burn'd to blast each heav'n-born bloom,
And Murder shrouded virtue in the tomb!
Then, like Vesuvius, blaz'd up honest rage!
Then Justice lighten'd from th' impassion'd page!
Then liberty, from her star-studded throne
Down-darting, mark'd the model of her own!
For liberty, like air, all unconfin'd,
Like reason, Magna Charta of mankind,
The mean, the partial purpose heaps with scorn;
But beams, like gladness, laughing from the morn,
Beams

Beams upon all ; tho', at heav'n's high command,
 She pours her brighter blessings on our land ;
 Beams upon all, tho' Nations prostrate lie,
 Nor owns one charter'd slave beneath the sky !
 Nor less th' Enthusiast spurns her equal sway—
 'The screech-owl blind beneath the blaze of day—
 Time yawn'd—and all was false, fanatic light,
 Mad meteors sweeping thro' the polar night !
 Time woke !—But ruin into Chaos hurl'd
 The Constitution, wonder of a world !
 That Sun, round whom each stated planet turns,
 When Monarchy in all her glory burns !
 Body and soul are King and people—" Prove—
 Our Monarch lives but in his people's love.
 His people too their Father all adore ;
 For virtue never brighter blaz'd before.
 Faction and falsehood to the venal slave,
 Freedom to Britons, freedom to the brave !

" Come the four corners of the world in arms,"
 Unshaken we, but by our own alarms.
 For but let Britons, heav'n's heroic race,
 Hush the hoarse war of factions into peace,
 Britain, herself a world, shall ever stand,
 And dash the roaring billows from the land.
 Yes !—Russel's blood still beats in honest veins,
 For Freedom—Look *—Immortal Freedom reigns !

* Looking round the whole House.

L O R D

LORD RUSSEL.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

The Palace.

FATHER PETERS and Sir GEORGE JEFFRIES.

FATHER PETERS.

NOT in all London, Jeffries, in all London,
Could such a jury, as thou say'st, be found.

SIR GEORGE.

Why, man, in Lucifer's demesne alone
Could I, from hell's black militia,
Cull such a jury, as would doom to slaughter
Ev'n holy Paul, should he return from heav'n;
Nor would our Felix tremble at his pleading.

B

FATHER

FATHER PETERS.

For treason utter'd but in Ruffel's hearing,
 And not approv'd, ev'n Draco's self would linger
 To doom him to destruction.

SIR GEORGE.

Thou a Jesuit !
 Had but his shadow pass'd along the chamber
 Of black conspiracy, I prove it treason.
 Have we no oaths, no absolutions, Father ?

FATHER PETERS.

Unnumber'd as the drops from vernal clouds.
 But still I fear this idol of the people.
 His name, like heav'n-born Alfred's, all ador'd
 His country hails ; as on the banks of Ganges
 The white-rob'd Magi hymn the glorious sun,
 When first he 'pears above the golden clouds :
 Nay such, my Jeffries, are his gentle virtues—
 The splendid sins of heresy—that Peters
 Would soften into friendship, were not Ruffel
 Cast forth beyond the church's sacred pale !
 Then let the dogs of persecution tear
 The Reformation's carrion.—
 But thy witness I fear.

SIR GEORGE.

Fear heav'n's ruins !

FATHER PETERS.

Whirl'd in wild eddy of perpetual motion,
 Light as inconstancy——

SIR

SIR GEORGE.

He is my son,

So firm fix'd in the centre, that his planets,
West, Rumsey, Sheppard, move obedient round him.

FATHER PETERS.

What magic power in nature to a point
Thus fixeth Howard?

SIR GEORGE.

Cowardice doth fix him.

Hence, like the flexile osier, to my will
The dastard bends, because full well he knoweth,
All apathy, I sit upon the bench,
The Rhadamanthus of the damn'd, presiding o'er
Those victims, drag'd to th' shrine of justice here.

FATHER PETERS.

Art thou ne'er wrung to pity by the tears
Of silent-pleading innocence?

SIR GEORGE.

Unmov'd as *Moloch*.

The rivers flowing from grief's copious fountain
Down the time-silver'd beard of awful Bedford;
The tears of Russel's consort, and his children;
Yea, all this ever-beating shower of sorrow
Falls on the marble of my heart like weeping
Of widow'd winter on th' impassive rock.
My thesis further prov'd,—the Rye-House plot,
Mere smoak of words, from rabble in the Temple,

These champions of their country know not of,
 Russel and Essex, Sidney, with their mob
 Of patient nobles.—

FATHER PETERS.

Groan they not in chains
 For black Assassination's hell-born projects?
 Why else rings all our island with escape
 Of Charles and James from murder at the Rye-House?

SIR GEORGE.

There triumphs genius! From our scanty shreds,
 The Rye-House plot, and councils of the nobles,
 Have we with matchless workmanship so woven
 One perfect piece, that even old Bedford could not,
 With Doubt's own microscope, a seam discover.
 But soft, lest haply, in despite of death,
 Howard be honest, and our teeming hopes
 Blast with abortion.—In thy trade bestir thee.

FATHER PETERS.

Doubt mutters not her treasons.—

SIR GEORGE.

Could my heart
 E'en thaw into compassion, ever, ever
 Should my soul, *Ætna* of revenge, to heav'n
 Burn from the depths of hell, 'till she disgorge
 Russel, who put such stigma on my name;—
 Abhorred, odious stigma,—and aloud
 The trembling Throne petition'd against Jeffries—

Hell

Hell, howl the traitor's dirge!—but I must hence—
 Swells with such tide of business ev'ry hour
 Of this important day, the fated ~~Ara~~
 Of Charles, or Russel, liberty or bondage!—

[Exit.]

FATHER PETERS.

Fortune, with radiant finger of the morn,
 Beckons me forth to chear our royal York
 With hope's fair vision, bright'ning thus from heav'n.

[Exit.]

SCENE II. *A Drawing-Room.*

Bedford-House.

The EARL of BEDFORD and HUBERT.

BEDFORD.

O misery! that ever I was born!
 I know not where I wander.—O the curse,
 The bitter curse of life! my boy! my William!
 The flow'r of England's sons!—why fled'st thou, Hubert,
 From the calm comforts of thy rural dwelling
 To see my house's ruin in my child?—

[Weeps.]

HUBERT.

Altho' unpiloted by reason, yet
 As by pale Woburn's winter-weeping turrets
 Sorrowing I pass'd, my streaming eyes I turn'd
 From chamber windows of my youthful lord,
 Through

Through which, like heav'n's self op'ning gates,
The manna of his charity he shower'd
On suppliant want. All night I journey'd on,
Till now, at blest dawn of light I found me,
Hither by instinct of affection drawn,
'Scap'd to my soul's dear sanctuary at length,
The mansion of my lord.

B E D F O R D.

The mournful mansion !
All that my soul held dearest torn away
By ruthless ruffians, torn from life's endearments,
Torn from embraces of his aged father,
His weeping wife, his angel-vifag'd children !

H U B E R T.

And heav'n not hurl down thunder on the villains ?
O had not Bedford, like his virtuous Russel,
With ill starr'd magnanimity, rebuk'd
Our just, our pious zeal, this land of heroes,
England, Heav'n's charter'd colony alone,
England again was free !

B E D F O R D.

What phrenzy fires thee ?

H U B E R T.

Phrenzy, my lord !—'tis freedom's genial dictates—
Let fawning slaves, with bigot adoration,
In other climates bow their abject necks,
Crawl on the dust, and lick a tyrant's foot-stool—
No slaves in England !—

B E D F O R D.

BEDFORD.

Ha! grey enthusiasm! Revive the rage
Of civil war, the more than Theban rage
Of York and Lancaster, to save my country!

HUBERT.

My lord, my lord, 'twas never well with England
Since plausibility, that ape of virtue,
Accurs'd exotic, to our soil transplanted,
The fountain of our native truth impoison'd.
Those are the dictates of a soul unmask'd;
A soul that scorns a peer,—that scorns a monarch,
When virtue blazon not his gorgeous scutcheon.
Should Russel on the groaning scaffold lean,
Like martyr'd innocence, his guiltless head,
Who then from legal murder pleads exemption,
When once Rome's black proscription is reviv'd
To waste our isle?—The bloody vulture, Jeffries,
Already snuffing up the scent of carnage,
His wings in trembling extacy dispreads,
And screams, like pale-ey'd famine, for his prey!

BEDFORD.

No passion riots in these icy veins—
My heart is cold as if the hand of death
Lay heavy on me. Wheresoe'er I wander
I meet my duteous angel in my pathway.
In my heart's core he lives; his form all lovely,
Bright as a winged messenger from heaven,
Visits my couch—I grasp him in my slumbers:
Nor less the visions of my waking hours;

I hear

I hear him pleading in his country's cause ;
 I see him smile around the genial board ;
 I see him tend me on the bed of sickness,
 And from his father hide the pious tear ;
 Mine evening-walk he graces ; and, by instinct,
 My hand I stretch to rest me on my child,
 The sole supporter of declining years,
 Heav'n's precious loan ! heav'n's cordial in my griefs !
 What shall I do ? Where turn me ? how survive
 The dear society that sweeten'd life,
 And gave my soul such rich fore-taste of bliss ?

HUBERT.

If thus the tempest tear the rooted oak,
 How will the lovely reed, with terror trembling,
 'Bide the full beating storm ? Ah ! me, the fair one !
 Our Ruffel's comfort ! bright as beaming virtue !
 How must the fading flow'r of beauty weep,
 Dash'd by such never-ceasing show'rs of sorrow !

BEDFORD.

She, too, with thorns bestrews my lonely pillow !
 Poor mourner !— scarce the shadow of existence,
 Pale nature startles at the piteous spectre !—
 She flies the social board, she flies from slumber,
 And in the *charnel-house* of weeping woe
 Alone she banquets with despair and death,
 While howling furies, ministr'ing around her,
 Present the goblet full—brim-full, of tears,
 Which ever and anon the mourner quaffs !
 Heav'n, shield my daughter !—

LADY

LORD RUSSEL.

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FATHER

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SIR

SIR GEORGE.

He is my sun,
So firm fix'd in the centre, that his planets,
West, Rumsey, Sheppard, move obedient round him.

FATHER PETERS.

What magic power in nature to a point
Thus fixeth Howard ?

SIR GEORGE.

Cowardice doth fix him.
Hence, like the flexible osier, to my will
The dastard bends, because full well he knoweth,
All apathy, I sit upon the bench,
The Rhadamanthus of the damn'd, presiding o'er
Those victims, drag'd to th' shrine of justice here.

FATHER PETERS.

Art thou ne'er wrung to pity by the tears
Of silent-pleading innocence ?

SIR GEORGE.

Unmov'd as *Moloch*.
The rivers flowing from grief's copious fountain
Down the time-silver'd beard of awful Bedford ;
The tears of Russel's consort, and his children ;
Yea, all this ever-beating shower of sorrow
Falls on the marble of my heart like weeping
Of widow'd winter on th' impassive rock.
My thesis further prov'd,—the Rye-House plot,
Mere smooch of words, from rabble in the Temple,

These champions of their country know not of,
Ruffel and Essex, Sidney, with their mob
Of patient nobles——

FATHER PETERS.

Groan they not in chains
For black Assassination's hell-born projects ?
Why else rings all our island with escape
Of Charles and James from murder at the Rye-House?

SIR GEORGE.

There triumphs genius ! From our scanty shreds,
The Rye-House plot, and councils of the nobles,
Have we with matchless workmanship so woven
One perfect piece, that even old Bedford could not,
With Doubt's own microscope, a seam discover.
But soft, lest haply, in despite of death,
Howard be honest, and our teeming hopes
Blast with abortion.—In thy trade bestir thee.

FATHER PETERS.

Doubt mutters not her treasons.—

SIR GEORGE.

Could my heart
E'en thaw into compassion, ever, ever
Should my soul, *Ætna* of revenge, to heav'n
Burn from the depths of hell, 'till she disgorge
Ruffel, who put such stigma on my name ;—
Abhorred, odious stigma,—and aloud
The trembling Throne petition'd against Jeffries—

Hell

Hell, howl the traitor's dirge!—but I must hence —
 Swells with such tide of business ev'ry hour
 Of this important day, the fated *Æra*
 Of Charles, or Russel, liberty or bondage!—

[Exit.]

FATHER PETERS.

Fortune, with radiant finger of the morn,
 Beckons me forth to cheer our royal York
 With hope's fair vision, bright'ning thus from heav'n.

[Exit.]

SCENE II. *A Drawing-Room.*

Bedford-House.

The EARL of BEDFORD and HUBERT.

BEDFORD.

O misery! that ever I was born!
 I know not where I wander.—O the curse,
 The bitter curse of life! my boy! my William!
 The flow'r of England's sons!—why fled'st thou, Hubert,
 From the calm comforts of thy rural dwelling
 To see my house's ruin in my child?—

[Weeps.]

HUBERT.

Altho' unpiloted by reason, yet
 As by pale Woburn's winter-weeping turrets
 Sorrowing I pass'd, my streaming eyes I turn'd
 From chamber windows of my youthful lord,
 Through

Through which, like heav'n's self op'ning gates,
 The manna of his charity he shower'd
 On suppliant want: All night I journey'd on,
 Till now, at blest dawn of light I found me,
 Hither by instinct of affection drawn,
 'Scap'd to my soul's dear sanctuary at length,
 The mansion of my lord.

B E D F O R D.

The mournful mansion !
 All that my soul held dearest torn away
 By ruthless ruffians, torn from life's endearments,
 Torn from embraces of his aged father,
 His weeping wife, his angel-vifag'd children !

H U B E R T.

And heav'n not hurl down thunder on the villains ?
 O had not Bedford, like his virtuous Russel,
 With ill starr'd magnanimity, rebuk'd
 Our just, our pious zeal, this land of heroes,
 England, Heav'n's charter'd colony alone,
 England again was free !

B E D F O R D.

What phrenzy fires thee ?

H U B E R T.

Phrenzy, my lord !—'tis freedom's genial dictates—
 Let fawning slaves, with bigot adoration,
 In other climates bow their abject necks,
 Crawl on the dust, and lick a tyrant's foot-stool—
 No slaves in England !—

B E D F O R D.

BEDFORD.

Ha! grey enthusiasm! Revive the rage
Of civil war, the more than Theban rage
Of York and Lancaster, to save my country!

HUBERT.

My lord, my lord, 'twas never well with England
Since plausibility, that ape of virtue,
Accurs'd exotic, to our soil transplanted,
The fountain of our native truth impoison'd.
Those are the dictates of a soul unmask'd;
A soul that scorns a peer,—that scorns a monarch,
When virtue blazon not his gorgeous scutcheon.
Should Russel on the groaning scaffold lean,
Like martyr'd innocence, his guiltless head,
Who then from legal murder pleads exemption,
When once Rome's black proscription is reviv'd
To waste our isle?—The bloody vulture, Jeffries,
Already snuffing up the scent of carnage,
His wings in trembling extacy dispreads,
And screams, like pale-ey'd famine, for his prey!

BEDFORD.

No passion riots in these icy veins—
My heart is cold as if the hand of death
Lay heavy on me. Wherefoe'er I wander
I meet my duteous angel in my pathway.
In my heart's core he lives; his form all lovely,
Bright as a winged messenger from heaven,
Visits my couch—I grasp him in my slumbers:
Nor less the visions of my waking hours;

I hear

I hear him pleading in his country's cause ;
 I see him smile around the genial board ;
 I see him tend me on the bed of sickness,
 And from his father hide the pious tear ;
 Mine evening-walk he graces ; and, by instinct,
 My hand I stretch to rest me on my child,
 The sole supporter of declining years,
 Heav'n's precious loan ! heav'n's cordial in my griefs !
 What shall I do ? Where turn me ? how survive
 The dear society that sweeten'd life,
 And gave my soul such rich fore-taste of bliss ?

HUBERT.

If thus the tempest tear the rooted oak,
 How will the lovely reed, with terror trembling,
 'Bide the full beating storm ? Ah ! me, the fair one !
 Our Ruffel's consort ! bright as beaming virtue !
 How must the fading flow'r of beauty weep,
 Dashed by such never-ceasing show'rs of sorrow !

BEDFORD.

She, too, with thorns bestrews my lonely pillow !
 Poor mourner !— scarce the shadow of existence,
 Pale nature startles at the piteous spectre !—
 She flies the social board, she flies from slumber,
 And in the *charnel-house* of weeping woe
 Alone she banquets with despair and death,
 While howling furies, ministering around her,
 Present the goblet full—brim-full, of tears,
 Which ever and anon the mourner quaffs !
 Heav'n, shield my daughter !—

LADY

LADY RUSSEL speaks within.

Hold me not, ye slaves !
What power on earth can thwart my passage
To my soul's treasure ?

HUBERT retiring.

Near at hand I'll wait,
In hopes to sooth their Anguish.—

[*Exit.*

LADY RUSSEL enters.

Murder !
From his dungeon they drag my lord !——
Save, save him !—Oh ! my Father!——

BEDFORD.

Heav'n's peace upon my child ! what new alarms ?

LADY RUSSEL.

London rocks all with uproar, as if France had pour'd
Her legions on us ! From my windows this moment,—
To mine aching sight what horror !——
The city shaking all as if in earthquake !
The whole multitude in tears, their glorious country-man
Applauding ; but heaping execrations on the tyrant !
Heav'n open all thy stores of burning vengeance on him !

BEDFORD.

Mine ever-gentle Rachel, mild of nature as smiling
Infancy, why thus thy heaven of innocence
O'ercaft by stormy passions ?—

C

LADY

LADY RUSSEL.

I know not, care not, what my madness utters,
My soul and body torn by grief asunder !

BEDFORD.

Comfort's benignant angel sooth thy sorrows,
And reason beam propitious on thy peace !

LADY RUSSEL.

Talk to the winds and waves, no ray of mercy
Gleams on a wretch, as I am, lost for ever !
O ! lost ! lost ! lost ! bereav'd of every joy,—
Bereav'd of him, my Lord, my light of life,—
Quench'd in these eyes that roll in vain to drink
The golden day of comfort !——

BEDFORD.

Every bliss
Of virtue be the portion of my daughter !
Recline thee on this bosom !

LADY RUSSEL.

My health's saviour,
Speed to the Tow'r, as pity's pinion'd angel
On charitable errand posts from heav'n !
One moment may be fatal to my peace ;—
The axe may drink his blood,—my Russel's blood !
Then, pale with new-born horror, shall the dead
Start from the wondering grave to hear my cries.

BEDFORD.

BEDFORD.

If heav'n with brighter virtues never blazon'd
Man's God-like race, than in this land of freedom,
Whence then these baseless fears? take comfort.

LADY RUSSEL.

O! never

Until I see my Lord?

[Weeps.

Enter HUBERT.

Hail, weeping virtue, hail!

LADY RUSSEL.

Ha! Hubert here!

Come from the dead! methought, at thy desire,
Thy corse in awful darkness of the tomb was
Stretch'd, at feet of Rachel and her lord,
Both 'scap'd at length to everlasting peace!
Methought, that when the hoarse, deep-droning beetle,
Wheeling with drowsy murmur o'er the graves,
Night's solemn curfew knell'd, thy shrieking ghost
Did warn us to arise, and faithful 'tendance gave
As in golden dawn of nuptial life! —

HUBERT.

My services—my life attending Russel!

LADY RUSSEL.

Why do'st thou look so steadfast on me, Hubert?
Thou see'st me chang'd indeed! —

These beamless eyes now sunk, the fountain of
 Their tears exhausted ! This hair, once graceful,
 Now the scorn of winds ! these woe-worn cheeks,
 The prey of death and famine !——
 Foodless I wander, and the war of nature,
 Too mighty for the feeble frame of woman,
 Stuns reason with unceasing roar of factions !

BEDFORD.

Angels surround my Rachel !

LADY RUSSEL.

O ! my Father !

Thy tears are warm upon my clay-cold hand !——

BEDFORD.

Such anguish rends my heart !——

LADY RUSSEL.

To Heaven what triumph

Can my sufferings be ? Upon the broad-bas'd mountains
 Let thunder fall, not on the new-born snow drop,
 That trembles at the breeze !——unhand me, Bedford !

[Breaks away.]

I will not, cannot longer bear a life,
 Thus doom'd to torture !——
 Let the roaring winds rock Earth and Heaven !
 On my poor naked head loud let the beating storm !——

BEDFORD.

Assist me, Hubert ! Oh ! my dear, dear Rachel !

LADY

LADY RUSSEL.

Not horror tears upon the groaning wheel
 Her pale expiring prey, as these fierce pangs—
 These more than pangs of death tear all my soul!
 Let me then fly from horrors of existence!
 Yes! to end all my sorrows, to some sleep
 Dreadful as cliffs of *Dover* will I fly,
 And headlong plunge into the roaring deep!

[*Exeunt.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT

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ACT II.—SCENE I.

The KING followed by the EARL of BEDFORD.

KING.

NAY! Bedford, nay! for charity, no more;
Or, like the stag, I turn upon my hunter,
With all his prowling pack so goaded—gor'd
By thee, and all thy race!—But not ev'n thou
Too little for resentment! Into passion
The river rous'd, nor scorns to sweep away
Ev'n the plebeian pebble in his rage,
Though rocks along the roaring torrent roll!

BEDFORD.

Death, nay, ev'n Jeffrie's self would weep—My sovereign,
Would'st thou, benignant angel, as thou art,
But lend one look to thy Southampton's daughter,
So fore beset with anguish!—Rachel! Rachel!
My soul's dear tendril! Why, sir, if she see not
Her prison'd lord!—This dropping of mine eyes,
Dropping, like life blood, from my broken heart!
But I no more will wound thee with my weeping!
Heap ruin on us all, we still shall love thee!
Oh, sire!—But thou could'st never, never bear it!

The

The thought is treason—Thou !—Thy god-like nature !
Would, like a father, scream at more than murder,
Thy Rachel driv'n to madness !——

KING.

Madness !——

BEDFORD.

Her mind already all a troubled sky,
Waving with fire, that if her lord she sees not,
She blazes into phrenzy !—then, for ever
Hollow and hoarse, the raven of despair
Croaks ov'r the blasted ruins of her reason !—
Hoary this head with sorrow, as with years,
To thee a bending suppliant, as to heaven !

KING.

A tear doth quench Vesuvius—Thou hast conquer'd !—
Hoary thine head, indeed, with frost of care,
As by deep-snowing time, while all thy soul
Melts in the thaw of nature !—Hence to comfort ;
And if the law—But fiery James doth wrest
The sword from lingering Justice !—Look ! he comes—
My brother comes ! avenging angel !—vanish !

BEDFORD.

Silence bedew thee all with blessings !

KING.

Vanish !——

[Exit Bedford.

The

The DUKE of YORK enters.

DUKE.

My brother ! Charles ! What glorious prospect !
 Russel, the regicide, from heaven hurl'd headlong,
 Like Lucifer by thunder !—Brighter day,—
 Brighter than when the sun first rose from chaos !
 Brighter than fame !—

KING.

My brother, worried,
 And all so fore from voyage, I would rather
 Anchor at home !—Mount thou the lawless wind !

DUKE.

The winds ! Too crippled couriers of revenge !—
 I mount the paler lightning that outstrips
 Idea,—bright imagination's sunbeam—and
 Blasts these tow'ring giants of rebellion,
 Ere ruin ride the thunderbolt from heaven !

Manet KING.

I follow him—or all is conflagration,
 Which must involve all England, me, my Portsmouth !
 By a mad meteor smote, the forest flames,
 And all around is undistinguish'd ruin !
 No sabbath for a sovereign !—from the thorns
 Of royalty no refuge !—happy Turk !—
 Happy, the turban'd lord of slaves alone,
 With beauty at his beck, rich rose of nature
 Blooming and breathing bliss, like thee, my Portsmouth !

D

SCENE

SCENE II.

*Enter Sir GEORGE JEFFRIES, and
LIEUTENANT of the TOWER.*

SIR GEORGE.

Ruffel unconquer'd, say'st thou, Kirk?

LIEUTENANT.

Would'st thou bend Atlas?—Not a world in arms
Could conquer England, or this more than Roman,
Her Ruffel!—

SIR GEORGE.

Kirk, thou only melt'st his marrow with slow
Consuming fire! But I shall tutor
Horror to tear him deep; for I shall raise him
To the false heaven of joy! The higher hope,
Deeper the fall of phantasy!

LIEUTENANT.

My Jeffries,
Oft on this heart her knife hath justice whetted;
But lower still this hell of vengeance—lower
Than yet hath open'd for the damn'd!

SIR GEORGE.

Brave Kirk!
Twin of our lion-heart, we did approve thee
Lieutenant of the tower, because thine hand,
Unfault'ring in anatomy of nature,

Traces

Traces into the soul her finer fibres,
Bleeding and beating anguish!

LIEUTENANT.

At our name

Tangier yet trembles!

SIR GEORGE.

Kirk, thy merit dies not!—

Although no sterling merit now but money.—

Then gorge on gold—no deeper mine than Bedford!

And when the pious axe hath done her duty,

Though weeping still with blood of Russel, hie we

To riot upon ruin!—to thine office!—

SCENE III.

The EARL of BEDFORD, knocking at the Tower.

Enter LIEUTENANT.

Perdition shred thee, Caitiff!—wherefore knock'st thou?

BEDFORD.

Bedford's unhappy Earl implores thy pity!

LIEUTENANT.

These doors too honest not to spurn a traitor!

BEDFORD.

No traitor hapless Bedford! nor a Russel

Whose ev'ry vein with loyalty, as life,

Beats unceasing!—Angels shield our monarch!—

From traitors shield him!—Ah! relent, and blessings
Of gratitude reward the pious deed!—

LIEUTENANT.

Impossible!

BEDFORD.

My paradise in prospect
And yet shut out from all her blooming joys!—
'Tis cruel!—

LIEUTENANT.

Hear me!

BEDFORD.

Leave me to my sorrows!—
Heav'n blasts the fiend, Ingratitude, with vengeance!

LIEUTENANT.

My lord, had'st thou learned fortitude at Tangier,
As Kirk hath learn'd, thou would'st, like me, or
Jeffries, forget the puling weaknesses of nature!

BEDFORD.

In vain, hereafter, at heav'n's judgment-seat,
Shall thy pale spirit scream aloud for mercy,
If to this rock thou chain me, like Prometheus,
Heart-torn by vultures!—

LIEUTENANT.

LIEUTENANT.

Waste ! mere waste of words !
Jeffries and death deny ! But thou not hear'st me !

BEDFORD.

Indeed I do not ! Sorrow drinks my blood !
Have I the frozen serpent in my bosom
Warm'd into life to sting my soul with anguish ?
Unhappy Bedford !——

LORD RUSSEL *within.*

Am I in heaven !—Or do I hear, indeed,
A father's voice, more grateful than the harpings
Even of triumphant angels ! From the ground
[Rattling of chains is heard within.]
Loose me, good murderers ! Let me look one moment—
One moment look thro' horror's iron windows,
There to behold a father ere I die!—

Enter HUBERT.

HUBERT.

News, my Lord Bedford !—

BEDFORD.

Would'st thou wound the dead?—
Would'st break a broken heart?—

HUBERT.

The King, all mercy, sends an order forth,
That comfort cheer the prison-hours of Russel,

'Till

'Till morrow's blessed morn, when radiant hand
Of freedom leads fair virtue forth from bondage,—
Her Ruffel leads, and gives him to his country,
Unclaim'd by law—nay ev'n ungall'd by trial!—

BEDFORD.

What doth he say?—

HUBERT.

Never was King so gracious!—At the tidings
My heart did leap with rapture, and aloud
The tuneful bells proclaim their joy;
While the whole city, bursting into shouts,
The glorious peal of freedom for her champion,
Rends the resounding sky!—

BEDFORD.

Am I awake?

Such bliss all at once to burst upon my soul
In such a flood of glory!—
Brightest intelligencer! welcome! welcome!

HUBERT.

During first beating of a father's heart,
That runs all o'er with fondness, I retire,
But will be forth anon!

BEDFORD.

I thank thee much!

I thank

I thank thee from my soul ! What charms in goodness !
Goodness ! rare pearl indeed ! —

[*Exit Bedford and Hubert.*]

SCENE IV.

Opens and discovers LORD RUSSEL in chains.

BEDFORD.

Deat to mine eyes as new-born light of heaven !
Do I then hold thee !

[*Embracing Lord Russel.*]

LORD RUSSEL.

Fountain of my life !

Thy voice, like inspiration, into pow'rs,
Unknown to nature, rous'd me ! At my foot
I dash'd the ugly monsters, that would plunge me
Yet deeper into darkness, and bereave me
Of life's fair sun-shine, beaming from thy presence !

BEDFORD.

Closer ! yet closer ! to thy father's heart,
That, beating at his bosom, aches with bliss !

LORD RUSSEL.

Beware some dreadful earthquake—for tho' satan
Enrobe him all in radiance, and belie
The lucid cherubim, shall I believe him ?
No ! nature never ratifies a compact
'Tweext such antipathies, as York and Russel !

BEDFORD.

BEDFORD.

Shall not ev'n here, as in the climes of joy,
 My William and the royal youth embrace !
 Antipathies no more !—For never ! never !
 Since the sun arose from chaos, shone out heav'n
 With glory, as at this all blissful period,
 Which rolls away to other worlds remote
 Exclusion's thunder-cloud, which o'er our house
 Frown'd, dreadful ! deep ! like last eclipse of nature !

LORD RUSSEL.

York, bloody as idolatrous, arise
 Into that god-like heroism—forgiveness !
 Forgive th' exclusion heroes, who defend'd
 Their country, like Thermopylæ !—Forgive
 Virtue's avenging angels, who from heaven
 Hurl'd thunder on that heav'n usurping Babel,
 The vatican, and to her center shook
 The Papal-world around !—When York forgives,
 The sun is polar darkness ! to Rome's Baal
 Russel shall bow the knee and all be chaos !

BEDFORD.

Ev'n should York's Duke, like Atè, on our house
 Frown black perdition, what would boot, my
 William, such darkness, brightning into glorious
 Summer of such benignant beams, the smiles of
 Charles—which now, like Nature's birth-day, gleam
 With gladness, and awake the dead ! awake
 Bedford from the grave !—

LORD

LORD RUSSEL.

All sacredness was once the royal word,
 But York's proud Bashaw lords it now in England,
 And, like the Turks, shall Britons groan in bondage?
 Liberty alone is life!—Loud thunder
 Shall the great globe o'erturn, e're god-like Britons,
 The chosen race of heaven, survive their freedom!

BEDFORD.

Justice mocks herself, if Charles—

LORD RUSSEL.

Thy soul, all goodness,
 Beams broad benignity on every object;
 But time shall stamp upon my words conviction!
 Charles hates our England, and the bloody York
 But triumphs in her ruin! To the scaffold
 If I be led the martyr for my country,
 In martyrdom I glory; for my blood
 Shall sweep this race of tyrants from the throne!
 England shall be immortal!—Tho' Ambition
 With foaming billows thunder all around her,
 That rock, the constitution, on her basis,
 Fix'd as foundations of the pillar'd globe,
 Shall dash, indignant, from her tow'ring shores
 Such idle war of waves!

[A shout.

E

BEDFORD.

BEDFORD.

What tumult yonder?

Alas! what sudden shouts? Sure no ill demon—

[*Exit Bedford.*]

Enter LADY RUSSEL.

In my Russel's arms!—

My sanctuary, my shelter from the world!

The fullness of beatitude surrounds me!

LORD RUSSEL.

My life! my angel!——

Such extasies, as while I thus infold thee,

My soul ne'er knew before!

LADY RUSSEL.

Alas! I fear me,

'Tis magic all! No—no—I grasp him, grasp him,

My very lord himself! His eyes rain brightness,

And bend upon me, like a radiant angel

Smiling o'er virtue! Thou resplendent host,

Triumphant sweep the golden lyres of heaven,

And yonder climes of living lustre fill

With jubilee, as when at nature's birth

Creation's glorious theatre resound'd!

For now, ye holy charities, no more do ye, like pity,

Weeping o'er my sufferings, from blooming bow'rs

Of amaranth descend to pour the balm of patience

Thro' my wounds!

LORD

LORD RUSSEL.

This ! this ! my Rachel,
Is not anticipation of heav'n's bliss,
But heav'n herself, with all her hidden hoard
Of happiness, at length pour'd down upon me !

LADY RUSSEL.

O my full heart !—but these are tears of joy !—

[*Weeps.*

My Russel !—My life's guardian sent from glory—
Sent to awake thy Rachel from the grave !
Sent down with joys of paradise around thee !
Sent down my angel to restore at length
Light to mine eyes, and comfort to mine heart !
Health of my soul, why thus, if thou love Rachel,
Melt'st thou, like weeping charity ?
My heart bounds with joy !
With transport bounds aloft !
Then look upon thy Rachel, for thine eye
Darts brighter rapture, than when holy union
First made thee mine !—

LORD RUSSEL.

Thou miracle to mortals !—

Enter the EARL of BEDFORD.

BEDFORD.

My heart's all rapture,
Thus to behold my children !

LORD RUSSEL.

But can'st thou tell me, father, can'st thou tell me,
How charity's fair angel hither led us
To meet again in bliss ?

BEDFORD.

Not I, my child !

LORD RUSSEL.

Hath York relented ?——Impossible !——

LADY RUSSEL.

Impossible indeed !——
Doth gloomy death relent ? No ! never ! never !
Then haply, like an oracle, thy Rachel
Reveals this black enigma !—York, pale coward,
Doth fear the roaring elements to rouse
England's majestic people, who when rous'd,
Would dash him down the preceptice of ruin !

LORD RUSSEL.

Joy, like a fever, beating in thy veins,
Burns on thy cheek, and shakes thee all with earthquake,
As grief hath shatter'd thy fair frame already !

LADY RUSSEL.

May holy light not shine with comfort on me,
If I not love thee, England, from my soul !—
If I not love my country, dear, dear, England,
That rescues thee from cruel fangs of power,

And

And thus, like charity's benignant angel,
Smiling in tears, from sorrow's gloomy grave
Wakes thy poor Rachel's corse, pale corse, indeed!
To quaff this sunshine of immortal joys!

L O R D R U S S E L.

Rome would have bow'd her head in adoration
Of Rachel, brighter than her Julian star,
Yea, bright as heav'n-born virtue!

L A D Y R U S S E L.

O my Russel, should I not love my country
As my soul? No Roman of them all, not Cæsar's self
Approach'd the capitol with nobler triumph
Than grac'd my progress hither! The whole city,
Great nursery of nations, forth was pour'd
To swell the train of Rachel!—

B E D F O R D.

Speed, speed thee, Hubert!
Speed like the winds!—Throw open all my doors!—
Give tendance to the people! Not a conduit
In London, but shall flow with wine to-day,
My brighter birth-day register'd in heav'n!
Send order rapid as the winds to Woburn!
Twice twenty leagues around invite the country!
Invite them all!—
Let the bells, merry as my singing heart,
Tell, tell their joys!
At once shall all the prison-doors be opened,
And wretchedness crawl forth to bask in sunshine,—

Life's

Life's genial sunshine, liberty restored !

Child, we shall sojourn with thee—shall be joined,

[To Lord Ruffel.]

And quaff health's radiant blessings to our sovereign !

William, conduct us forth !—I once did fear

My soul should ne'er thus largely drink of comfort !

Mine heart, like happiness, runs o'er in tears,

[Weeps.]

While thus mine heart-strings cling around my children !

[Exit, embracing Lord and Lady Ruffel.]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT

ACT III.—SCENE I.

Sir GEORGE JEFFRIES and FATHER PETERS.

FATHER PETERS.

Lord Howard at my levee ! Precious Judas !

SIR GEORGE.

Among thy liv'ried myrmidons without
He waits admittance.

FATHER PETERS.

Then must I again

Be Father Peters in life's various drama,
Who wins the bursting plaudit—o'er the stage
Leads various visag'd passions in his train,
And bends to circumstance each stubborn feature !
Thus fiery Peters oft,—occasion prompter—
Acteth the faintly meekness !—But, my Jeffries,
Why with such peals of joy resounds the city ?—

SIR GEORGE.

By magic of mine art !—'Twas I alone,
Who lent this momentary gleam of gladness !—

FATHER

FATHER PETERS.

I wander thro' the labyrinth of error!—
Thou giv'st no clue!—

SIR GEORGE.

No,—yet must we initiate
Thee into darker mystery of murder!—
The King sees London phrenzy'd all with joy!
Joy of refounding worlds!—for whom?—for Russel!—
But thinks high heav'n rebounds the vast acclaim
For him alone, as if a God descend'd!—

FATHER PETERS.

Now should the star of Russel, like orion,
Arise in storms, and rouse the foaming tide
Of popular commotion!—

SIR GEORGE.

From the city
I vanish, brief as vision on a sun-beam,
Or plunge into the Tow'r from storm of blows,
Beating, like thickest hail, upon my casket!

FATHER PETERS.

For me France opens her maternal arms!
France, my soul's sanctuary!—

SIR GEORGE.

James, all-abandoned!—

FATHER

FATHER PETERS.

Each for himself in shipwreck!—

SIR GEORGE.

Thou improvest!

Suspicion, wakeful dragon, have I drench'd,—
With opiate drench'd,—for Russel sleeps secure,
And thinks to 'scape ev'n ordeal of a trial

[*Goes to the door.*]

Lord Howard there!—approach!—

Enter LORD HOWARD.

LORD HOWARD.

Hail, Father, hail!

[*To Peters.*]

FATHER PETERS.

My son, grace guide thy footsteps!

SIR GEORGE.

Howard, if merit crown thee with her chaplet,
Prepare thee quick for fortune's fullest spring-tide,
O'er-flowing all the naked beach around thee!

LORD HOWARD.

Thy word is fate, and I thy rapid Iris!—

SIR GEORGE.

Can'st thou not swear upon occasion?

F

LORD

LORD HOWARD.

Swear!—

No doubt when justice—

SIR GEORGE.

Ha! my rapid Iris!—

Beware! beware!—Awake not into flame

The sleeping embers!—

FATHER PETERS.

Mark me, my son Jeffries,—

Mark me—Profession doth out-strip the wind,

While, slow as snail, gout-crippled service lags

Far in the rear!

LORD HOWARD.

But should I swear untruly—

SIR GEORGE.

What boot thine oaths against the traitor, Ruffel?

The feeblest fly, that e'er Domitian, bodkin'd,

Would scorn such flimsy texture!

FATHER PETERS.

Thou a preacher!—

[*To Lord Howard.*]

LORD HOWARD.

What more could fealty do, than Howard did?

I swore, at Sheppard's, with the spurious Monmouth

I saw

I saw him in close converse ;— and when Rumsey,
With Ferguson, harangu'd their brother traitors,
On seizing of the guards, he look'd disdain !—
He turn'd him from the nest of crawling vipers,
And never stamp'd their plotting with his sanction !

FATHER PETERS.

Babbling of party !—babbling of the pack !
All venal echoes !

SIR GEORGE.

This would rouse the patience
Of Job to madness !—Array'd with regal power,
I hurl my warder on the ground, forbidding
Such chivalry,—this idle war of words !—
Instant annihilation is thy doom

[To Lord Howard.

If Russel be not headless, e'en ere noonday !—
Thine oaths alone hurl ruin on the traitor !—
Hast thou seen Sidney, as we ordered, Howard ?

LORD HOWARD.

At early day I saw him

SIR GEORGE.

Do his pulses
Still beat with rapture at the sound of freedom ?—
Still doth he hold him to his rigid purpose ?—

LORD HOWARD.

At the storm

The rugged bear growls hoarser indignation !—

SIR GEORGE.

We all are brave at distance from destruction,—
 But from the dizzy precipice of death
 The braggart nature backward shrinks with horror !
 Hence then with offer of life's radiant boon,
 If he, returning to allegiance, open
 Pandora's box of Shaftsb'ry's treasur'd treasons,
 And dash rebellion in the teeth of Ruffel !—
 No canting now, fanatic !—On thine errand !—
 And as thou go'st, peruse this list of names,—
 Names of the jury, pack'd for Ruffel's trial !
 Wealth strews thy paths with pearl if thou be honest,
 Death-pale perdition riots on the traitor !—

[Exit Lord Howard]

Thus do I ride the slave, as royal James
 Shall lash this harness'd people in his anger,
 And bend their stubborn necks beneath the yoke !
 Their charters have we seiz'd ;—the jury's ours,—
 The Sheriffs too ;—West, Howard, Rumsfey, Sheppard,
 Gaping to swallow each tremendous oath !—

FATHER PETERS.

In sudden radiance shoots across my mind

Thought,

Thought, like a meteor!—Jeffries, in thine ear,—
Essex is, in the Tower!—

SIR GEORGE.

Hah!

FATHER PETERS.

Strong as a thousand witnesses, the rumour
Of his escape from justice by self-slaughter,
Would stamp such deep conviction of the plot,
That the hoarse scaffold would cry out for Russel!

SIR GEORGE.

This morn the royal brothers to the Tower
Betake them—and then—Hush!—hush!—Time is pale
At the black hour's approach, whose bloody hand,
The dagger shakes at Essex!

FATHER PETERS.

While lives Charles,
What rapid *interregnum* of our hopes?—
James, thunder bearing eagle, from the clouds
Strikes opposition dead, whose bold ambition
Dar'd soar into his native climes of glory!—

SIR GEORGE.

Is nature then so barren, that no simples,
Fate's botanists, can cull for one quietus?
No Mithridate? No Priest to sing a requiem
To Charles in paradise?—

FATHER

FATHER PETERS.

Already death tears up his tomb !—
Doubt not the fainted order of Ignatius,
That shakes with terror Europe's mightiest thrones !

SIR GEORGE.

When James's sceptre, chang'd into a serpent,
Swallows the venom'd vermin of the state,
We goad the royal bastard into ruin !—
Monmouth, proud Phaëton, proscrib'd Argyle,
That gloomy covenanters from the North,
And ev'n the coward Grey, now link'd together,
Black treason's knotted toads !—Then England all
Shall be Aceldama, the soul of Jeffries
Burns with such drought of blood, and in his progress
He drags the foaming fury at his wheels,
Self-gnawing freedom !—

FATHER PETERS.

At this early hour,
See royal York hastes hither from his chamber
To conference with Peters ; tho' already,
Soon as the lark at heav'n's gate sung his mattins,
He purg'd him by confession !—

SIR GEORGE.

At his nod
I robe me in the rolling flames of vengeance,

And

And hence go forth, the throne's destroying angel,
To triumph o'er the headless trunk of Russel!—

[Exit Sir George Jeffries.]

Enter the DUKE of YORK.

DUKE.

Again, my Peters, hail!

FATHER PETERS.

Rome's glorious champion!—

DUKE.

Champion indeed! tho' heav'n not hears my wrongs!
At Westminster presented to the jury
A papist!—a recusant!—By the commons
Aloud excluded from my native throne,
And but half-rescued by the lords from ruin!—
Revil'd by heretics!—insulted!—driven,
Like Cain, an houseless wanderer thro' Europe,
Because I bow me at the chair of Peter!—
Heav'n's hoard of vengeance
Be emptied on my house, if I forgive thee!—
If I forgive thee—Russel,—if I not
Hurl thee with thunder from thy tow'ring Pelion
Of bold rebellion!—thee and all thy Titans!—
Thine earth-born giants!—who with impious war
Dar'd circumscribe omnipotence by laws!—

FATHER

FATHER PETERS.

The dead would feel such wrongs!—the dead would start
From sufferings, such as thine, heroic martyr!—

DUKE.

Th' arch-traitor, Shaftsb'ry, hath 'scap'd to Holland,
And base-born Monmouth flies the bolt of Justice!—
Both leave their portion of revenge to Ruffel!—
Rich legacy of horrors!—To their heir
Not ev'n the fraction of a groan unpaid!—

FATHER PETERS.

Prophetic dawns break upon my mind!—

DUKE.

Some vision darting on thy soul from heaven!—

FATHER PETERS.

Prophetic do I speak?—Not long shall York
Wield delegated thunders!—

DUKE.

Lives not Charles!—

FATHER PETERS.

He lives his moment!—Time, not fate, I heard
Pronounce the stern decree!—When then thou sit'st,
Like Solomon, on throne of thy forefathers,
Wilt thou not hear the blood of martyr'd Jesuits,
Which night and day, unceasing, cries for vengeance!—

DUKE

DUKE.

Blood must be paid for blood, when pow'r tears open
Our Inquisition's iron gates of war !—
The King advances—

Enter KING CHARLES.

KING.

Ha! priest-ridden James !—
For ever with the crozier in thy hand !—
Why, man, such sordid ivy twin'd around thee,
Must drain thy vital sap, and of his honours
Spoil the majestic-spreading oak of England !
Yes ! yes ! When thou shalt mumble o'er thy vespers,
[*Pointing to Peters.*]
Hie thee, with thine Achates by thy side,
To Sidley's bow'r of bliss.—

DUKE.

Thou wrong'st the Jesuit !—
No bolder Palinurus England boasts
To guide the storm-toss'd vessel of the state
Thro' faction's roaring tide !—

KING.

We would be private.
[*To Peters who goes out looking sternly behind him.*]
His looks scowl murder !—The fierce Parthian, flying,
Shot the death-barbed arrow thro' my heart !—
That green-ey'd tiger's glare,—He heaps unsparing,

G

The

The coals of burning ruin on thy head !—
Perhaps on mine !— !— !

DUKE.

Reprefs not, good my brother,
His noble bearing.

KING.

Europe swears aloud,
These vipers thro' her womb ne'er tore their passage !
These vipers ! thy triumvirate of friends !
This fiery bigot, Peters !—Bloody Jeffries !—
And Kirk, that Moor from Tangier ! peerless savage !
Rouze thee ! lethargic James ! or such a storm
Of black perdition beats upon thy house,
As sweeps thee and thy race,—unpiti'd ruins
Of royalty,—from this indignant land,
The chaff of Europe, blown about by winds,
The bitter breath of scorn !—

DUKE.

With heav'n the feer
Holds ceaseless intercourse ; then, sure, thou wrong'st—

KING.

I see, how sets the current of our fate !—
Proceed no further in this bloody business !—
Not yet proceed !—for time, and earth and
Heav'n,—yea, and the grave, arrest thy lifted
Arm, that wields too sudden the red-bolt of
Vengeance !—I see the genius of unconquer'd England!
Hence

Hence to thine idle bed !—Give life to Ruffel,
Essex, and Sidney !—Nay, if golden days—

DUKE.

No more !—My soul 'gainst storms of opposition
Blazes with fiercer conflagration !—
Shall mortal force then drag from grasp of death
The murd'rer of my peace, heav'n-blasted Ruffel ?—
Who from the royal eagle's talons teareth
The precious, precious quarry of his vengeance ?—
Hath he not by his bold blaspheming bill
Of English ostracism,—th' exclusion-bill,—
Wag'd war upon our house,—eternal war ?—
Hath he not rouz'd all England to sedition ?—
Hath he not,—like a commoner of nature,—
Ev'n royal York presented to a Jury ?—
Hath he not driven me—like a felon driven me—
Forth from domestic bliss, my wife ! my children !
My native land !—my Charles !—
Hath he not turn'd his back upon thy councils,
And gloom'd contempt upon his sacred sovereignty ?—
Hath he not ?—Oh !—But choler choaks mine
Utterance !—Hath he not hurl'd the gauntlet
Against Rome ?—

KING.

I hate this Ruffel more than thou can'st hate him !—
Thou hat'st from passion, but I hate from reason !—
My feelings strong as thine are !—but James ! James !

Thou know'st not England well as Charles doth know
her !—

Well may'st thou force hell's adamantine gates,
As force an Englishman !—Thou driv'st this island
Full into union, and this isle united
Defies—like fate, defies !—the world in arms !
“ Divide and conquer ” !—Hence these fatal names !—
Fatal to England,—names to nurture party !—
For while hoarse factions growl these sounds of
Discord, England is Babel, and the war of factions
Rolls larger devastation thro' the land,
Than France and Spain united against England !—

DUKE.

Firm, as heav'n's pillars, rooted in the cause
Of liberty, this Ruffel, blasts thy projects !—
Then sweep him to perdition—deep in blood,—
Deep in black blood of treason,—drown the scaffold !
Time counts into an age each tedious hour !—
Fate marks thy word, and, rapid on the wing,
Rouzes the slumb'ring dragon into rage !—
Jeffries ! in blood unrivall'd !—yes, my brother,
Hale Ruffel forth to instant execution,
And the pale famine gorge of kneeling vengeance !—
[Kneels.]

KING.

Ruin of all thy race !—These storms of passion
Dash on destruction thine unballanc'd vessel,
And forward drive me too, on roaring Scylla !—

Thou

Thou, worse than Shaftsb'ry wound'st me, James !
 I tell thee, thy madness will rouse England, and
 When rous'd, she is invincible, like heav'n's high
 Fortrefs, that mocks the roaring elements !—
 Alone by luxury affailable, like Rome,—
 And by corruption,—this imperial nation
 Loofeth omnipotence !—The blooming virtues,
 Which in their native Paradise of England,—
 Like Sharon's new-born rose,—once blush'd with beau-
 ty,—
 Hence have I blasted, like an envious east-wind !—

DUKE.

Time's rapid flood not more awaits thy caution,
 Than the full tide obey'd imperial Canute !—
 More wonders York atchieveth in an hour,
 Than Charles in years !—Give Ruffel to revenge,
 Or,—by the *Manes* of my martyr'd father,—
 I leave thee, naked, to the storms of treason !—

KING.

Avaunt !—I shall be great then, because honest !—
 Live, like a king, the father of my people !—
 And give thee and thy priesthood to perdition !—

DUKE.

Rome hurls her thunder on rebellion !—

KING.

England, Rome's slave !—Th' imperial blood of England
 Bounds in my heart, and burns into defiance !—

What

What holy ruffian, dare on anointed majesty of
England plant his proud heel, as once on neck of
Lackland who crouch'd beneath a priest?—
Black bigot, hence!—

DUKE.

I cannot leave thee, Charles!—not more my brother
By nature's soft endearments, than by exile!—
Not with more anguish wept thy bleeding York,
When the curst test-act tore me from my country!—
Drown'd was thy York in bitter-bursting tears,
When exile drag'd him forth the scorn of Europe,—
Drag'd him,—like yearning nature,—forth from
Thee! from thee! his Charles! his father! brother!
friend!—

KING.

To thee a tender brother have I been,—
And ever shall be!—Thou, indeed, hast conquer'd!—
Weep not, poor York!—the sceptre is thine own!—
That sceptre, torn from gripe of conclave'd villains,
Who plung'd to hell, and barter'd with damnation
Fee simple of their souls, for thine exclusion!—

DUKE.

Then every groan of Ruffel, like my birth-right,
I seize,—my life-blood's treasure!—

[*Going.*

KING.

Whither fly'st thou?

DUKE.

DUKE.

To Jeffries.—

KING.

Go!—But from the lynx-ey'd public
Shroud thee in caution,—rein thy fiery nature,—
And let no clamour rouse me, while reclin'd,—
All like the listless gods of Epicurus,—
I slumber on the softest down of pleasure!—

DUKE.

Where shall we meet, my Charles? Where! where!

KING.

Where but at beauteous Portsmouth's?—Thence with
thee

Wee speed unto the tow'r, as we appointed!—

DUKE.

Shake not the bulwarks of the hoary tow'r?—
With terror shake?—though pil'd aloft by Cæsar,—
When greater York, like gloomy death, approaches?—

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

SIDNEY and LORD HOWARD.

SIDNEY.

Ruffel, to perish like a traitor!—Ruffel, drag'd
By a ruthless bigot to the block!—by James, of York!—

Black

Black bigot, like a storm—Ruin of nations,—of himself—
His children !—

LORD HOWARD.

Not hear me, Algernon ?—

A. SIDNEY.

A ! House of Norfolk,
How art thou fall'n !—Thy great progenitor,—
Heroic Howard—when with her Elizabeth
Heav'n sought alliance,—from her basis shook
The pillar'd globe with Britan's brandish'd trident,—
And, like omnipotence—with thunder hurl'd
Philip,—all-grasping Spaniard,—like Typhœus
From zenith of his grandeur !—

LORD HOWARD.

Mad magician !

To conjure up departed virtue's ghost,
To scream at life !—Talk thus, like simple dotage,
Of faws so obsolete !—at such an æra,
When interest,—like the bitter-breathing North,—
Blights the fair blooms of friendship,—at the touch
Of her all fascinating wand dissolves
The charities of nature, and imprints—deep on
The tablet of each human heart—gold, the great
Magnet of mankind !—

A. SIDNEY.

A. SIDNEY.

Avaunt !

Apostate of thy race !—how abject !—fallen
From virtuous native grandeur to the level of
Panders,—parasites,—hell-doom'd informers,—
Refuse of blushing nature !—O ! awake !—
To thine own dignity, awake !—nor herd with slaves,
Who thirst for god-like Russel's blood !—

LORD HOWARD.

If ruin's rav'ning vulture scream,—like famine,—
Hov'ring o'er Russel's head, her destin'd quarry,—
Why shou'd pale malice,—like assassination,—
Bury her dagger in the heart of Howard ?—

A. SIDNEY.

Absent thee from the trial !—If thou go,
Loud infamy,—like ever-barking Scylla,—
At once unkennels all her dogs to bay thee !—
Nay hunt thy shrieking ghost, like opening blood-hounds
For ever through hell's hoarse-responding glooms !—

LORD HOWARD.

Who knows not Russel's guilt ?—

A. SIDNEY.

His innocence !—

H

LORD

LORD HOWARD.

His trait'rous plot?—

A. SIDNEY.

His more than Roman virtue!—

LORD HOWARD.

His bold rebellion?—

A. SIDNEY.

His unconquer'd love of liberty, and every
Noble virtue!—Ah! hear, like me, the thrilling cries of
Anguish, that hourly fill the melancholy mansion
Of Bedford, in the tomb of sorrow stretch'd!—
Pale spectre of affliction,—pale as glides a widow'd ghost
Along the groaning graves of some hoar-abbey, weeping
O'er it's ruins, Ruffel's fair consort, drown'd like Niobe,
In never-ceasing tears!—

LORD HOWARD.

Psha! woman's tears!—

A. SIDNEY.

Had'st thou beheld her, Howard!—For even rocks
Burst into tears of sympathy!—She wanders—all-wild
She wanders with dishevell'd hair, in depths
Of midnight through the dreary dwelling, and
Hears in hoarseness of the fullen winds, the grave,
With awful voice, demand her Ruffel!—

Compassion,

Compassion, with uplifted hands to heav'n,
Pleads for Southampton's daughter!—nay, for thee!—

LORD HOWARD.

For me, good Sidney?—

A. SIDNEY.

Yes!—for thee!—for often in those awful hours
Of darkness,—when nature in the tomb of silence rests,—
I start from solemn musings, or from sleep,—
Rouz'd by horror at shriekings of thy pale immortal
Spirit to snatch thee from damnation of the dead!—
I warn thee, then, like heav'n!—If iron-hand of
Rigour drag thee to York's curs'd tribunal,
Be still an Englishman!—Unaw'd by terror,—
Unbrib'd by gold,—nay, uneduc'd by pleasure,—
Assert thy country's cause!—

LORD HOWARD.

The trite, trite bombast
Of every modern Proteus of a faction!—

A. SIDNEY.

By the great soul of Hampden, I would rather
Beggar this breast of honour,—rather crouch, like mi-
sery,
Before the grass-grown threshold for a pittance,
Such as nature casts the gorge at, than live—
One moment live—so base a Briton!—

LORD HOWARD.

Once 'twas the rooted purpose of my friendship
To rescue thee from death.—

A. SIDNEY.

What !—

Owe my life to thee !

Thou vile compeer of perjurers !—

LORD HOWARD.

This madness wilt thou rue !—for hear'st thou not
The sullen roar of winds, that hither roll from yonder
Clouds,—and swell into a storm, to sweep thee
Screaming from the shores of time !—

A. SIDNEY.

Shall Greek—shall Roman—boast a nobler name,
Than dignifies an Englishman ?— No ! Howard !—
Should anguish tear this sobbing heart asunder,—
When from the scaffold death shall dash aloof
Tear-dropping time, and o'er this martyr'd head
Wield the blue-gleaming axe,—from thee alone
The last great pang arises !—thee ! thou base one !—
Whom I—by lightning of delusion blasted !—
Did into sacred mysteries initiate of liberty,
And thus destroy'd my country !—

Begone !—

Begone!—No farther parley deigns the soul
Of Sidney!—Hence! or, by my wrongs,
These chains—by thee in hell of perjury
Forg'd,—anticipate th' uplifted bolt of heav'n!—

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT

ACT IV.—SCENE I.

*The EARL of BEDFORD and LORD RUSSEL.**EARL of BEDFORD.*

Yes! thou wert ever studious—ever gentle!—
 In life's recess all melting into mildness!—
 As glorious in the senate!—such as heav'n
 Nature's fair model forms!—Then, O! my child!
 Wound not thy fond, fond father!—For if anger
 Again should shake the throne, and lour upon thee,
 My heart will rend in twain, and I once more
 Shall be the wretchedest of nature's children!—
 Wound not thy father, who would die for thee!—

LORD RUSSEL.

Tho' in the secret foldings of my heart
 With life intwin'd, as with my dearer country,
 My father's hallow'd image deep-enshrin'd,
 Holds residence, as in her native temple—
 My very father would I have impeach'd,
 Had he advis'd such treason against England,
 As not at once to sweep off from the throne
 The royal traitor, York!—Yes! yes! my father!
 Should haughty Rome once lord it o'er this land,
 And blast the swelling harvest of our glory,—

Ruffel

Russel shall die, as he hath liv'd—with honour !—
 Russel shall die an Englishman !—nor bow
 To Roman fortitude !

BEDFORD.

Ah ! my child ! my child !—
 Why should'st thou by the bold exclusion-bill
 Have darted full into the cannon's throat ?—
 A pebble turn aside the roaring torrent,
 That shakes Olympus !—

LORD RUSSEL.

Like gladness on the wing, behold our dove,—
 Sweet legate,—hither bears the blooming olive !
 Yes ! yes ! my fair, reflection of heav'n's brightness !—
 My Rachel, like the sun-engender'd rainbow,
 Shines forth in gracious signal from the clouds !—

Enter LADY RUSSEL.

'Tis twenty thousand years since I have seen thee !
 For every moment teems with tedious years,
 While envious time divorceth me from bliss !—
 From thee, my Russel !—Soon as to the palace
 I sped me to fall down in adoration,
 And bathe,—like weeping gratitude,—the feet
 Of all-benignant Charles,—the doors self-open'd,
 As if by instinct, for approaching virtue !—
 But the rich freight of radiant hope was lost !—
 For ere I did arrive, the royal brothers
 Sudden in solemn council were conven'd !—

I would

I would have tarry'd, but that love, like fate,
Recall'd me hither to my heart's asylum!—

LORD RUSSEL.

With equal ardour burn'd my soul's impatience!—

BEDFORD.

Nay! nay! my darling Rachel!—if thou win not
Release from prison, until morrow's noon,
Ev'n here we shall be happy with our William,
And rise at length to heav'n's uncloud'd joys!—

LADY RUSSEL.

Rise from the grave, indeed!—When at our hearth—
Rescu'd from all the horrors we have suffer'd,—
Again with sweet communion shall we sit,—
Like innocence and peace,—by heav'n attend'd,—
And crown'd by heav'n with nuptial benediction,—
Thy doors unfold them,—like the gates of glory,—

[To Lord Russel.]

To every breeze that whispers thine approach!—

LORD RUSSEL.

Virtue!—Too bright a miracle for mortals!—

LADY RUSSEL.

I know when Charles comes forth!—upon the instant,
Like fire-wing'd expedition!—ev'n like moments!—
Fractions of time too rapid to be reckoned!—
I haste to clasp him,—like Southampton,—to my soul!—
For I adore our monarch like a father!—

I

Yes!

Yes!—he was ever to our house a father,—lean'd
O'er imploring innocence,—and wont,—like a
Propitious angel,—to smile upon me!

LORD RUSSEL.

Charles once hath known his sorrows, and from suffering
May melt into humanity for others!—
O! had our sovereign steer'd 'twixt France and Rome,
Beyond great nature's charter, the golden age was ours,
And Charles,—like Saturn,—had reign'd in bliss o'er
These adoring nations!—greatest of monarchs reign'd—
For such our kings, when thron'd on basis of their
People's love!—

LADY RUSSEL.

Ev'n life's bright summer hath her cloud!—
For when, in high delirium of my joys, light as a roe,
I bounded to my sov'reign,—sudden my beating
Heart did sink within me,—as York's dread
Mansion,—dread as Molock's temple,—I pass'd,
All pale as terror!—For methought the windows
Blush'd with blood, and death-pale murder
From the gloomy Inquisition yell'd!—
Swift I return'd to hide me in thy bosom!—
For in life's dreary pilgrimage I find no gracious
Sanctuary, but thee,—my Russel!—

LORD RUSSEL.

Hea'v'ns music warbles from my Rachel's tongue,
And the rich strains,—like midnight-hymn of

Angels,

Angels,—nature all raptur'd silence,—raptur'd wonder—
At length attunes my bosom into peace !—

LADY RUSSEL.

Our house,—at glorious tidings of her lord,—
Burst into joy to crown my soul's millenium !—
With thee the feast of Paradise we hold,—
Lest fate should doom thee to this doleful mansion,
'Till morrow's noon-tide sun !—

Enter HUBERT, and Children.

LADY RUSSEL.

Hubert !— my children !—

HUBERT.

Here anon they wait thee !—

LADY RUSSEL.

Come hither, pretty Wriothesly !—Rachel !—Cath'rine !—
Let !—let us all embrace—My husband !—children !—
My father !—Hubert !—Let us all embrace,—
And Heav'n on happiness look down in wonder !

[All embracing.]

Enter the LIEUTENANT of the TOWER,
with several Officers of Justice.

LIEUTENANT.

I drag thee forth to trial !—Here !—mine order !—

[To Lord Russel.]

I 2

LORD

LORD RUSSEL.

O misery!—

LIEUTENANT.

Upon the neck of Kirk thine hell was planted!

LORD RUSSEL.

Thro' my reins and marrow
York's deadly dagger!—Earth and heaven! I reel,—
Stun'd by the mortal blow!—From joy's bright summer
Hurl'd headlong all at once to depths of woe!—
Must I then part from thee!—

[*To Lady Ruffel.*

From thee, my father!—

Part from my children!—part from thee, my country!—

LADY RUSSEL.

Hark!—

[*Looking distracted.*

All dizzy as my maddening brain!—
Wild as distraction!—whirls the world around me!—
On the winds, my frightened senses fly!—I never!—never!—
Loud tho' destruction roars!—will never leave thee!—

[*Holding Lord Ruffel.*

BEDFORD.

My child!—so lately rescu'd from the grave!—

[*Embracing Lord Ruffel.*

O! Sir!—one moment,—one little moment!—

[*To Lieutenant.*

LIEUTENANT.

LIEUTENANT.

Hence!—hence!—old rebel!—

LORD RUSSEL.

Let the frame of nature
Quake, like her mountains, at this more than thunder!
Why, heav'n, am I forlorn!—by vengeance blasted!—
Doth not the felon live, though red with murder!—
Shall tyrants hurl thy thunder-bolts abroad,—
And thou not rouse from slumber at the roar!—
Pulse of my bleeding heart! my wife!—my children!—
My father!—Hubert!—

[Embracing them.]

LIEUTENANT.

Tear them all asunder!—
Off with him to trial!—

LORD RUSSEL.

Tear me from life!—Be charitable!—Tear me
From life!—from bliss!—and I shall bless perdition!—
Ye tear my heart-strings!—Cling not thus around
Me!—Murder!—the friends of darkness all unchain'd!—
They scream!—they scourge me with their fiery
Scorpions!—Heav'n! art thou just!—Why
With plagues!—with famine!—
Why did'st thou not rain down thy vengeance
On me—and not with horrors harrow up my soul!
From my heart drag these fair creatures!—
Drag me to the block!—
Drag me! ye pious murderers! from torture!—

LADY

LADY RUSSEL.

Will—will no charitable finger close
 These eyes in death, that they may wake no more!—
 To anguish wake!—and thus not weep for ever!—
 My lord!—my life!—my husband!—father!—friend!—
 My soul clings all around thee!—
 Avaunt, ye venal slaves!—

[*Breaks away.*]

Dare! dare!—ye tyrants, plunder me of bliss!—
 The bliss of social ruin with my lord!—

[*Flies to Lord Russel, and is taken off with him.*
Exit Bedford, Hubert and Children.]

SCENE II.

Enter JEFFRIES and MURDERER.

JEFFRIES

Why shak'st thou, coward?—shak'st thou at shadows?—
 Essex,—as if already in the grave,—sits by the lonely
 Glimmering of a lamp!—
 Haste then!—and seize the moment on the wing:—
 And when the deed is done—the secret signal hold!
 From the hand of royal gratitude,—
 This splendid earnest!—

[*Gives a purse.*]

Hence,—hence,—caution,—caution!—

[*Exit Murderer.*]

Enter

Enter the DUKE of YORK.

YORK.

Death to my hopes,—impatience,—scourged me hither —
Rumour proclaims aloud the jury honest!—

JEFFRIES.

Honest as Aristides!—Fear'st thou therefore?—

YORK.

They never will condemn him!—

JEFFRIES.

Never! prince!

YORK.

Never! by Loyola!—

JEFFRIES.

Mad bit by party!—

YORK.

Will they! tho' janizaries of the cause!
Damn them yet deeper?—

JEFFRIES.

The wide poles of nature
Antipathies embrace!—what party cease
To worry party?—o'er their visual ray
I cast the film of prejudice, and bear my hood'd
Hawks, to pounce the fated quarry!—

DUKE.

DUKE.

Be chancellor of England!—Sovereign!—
Be what thou wilt!—

SIR GEORGE.

Imprimis,—upon Russel
I prove the Rye-house-plot!—

DUKE.

Impossible!—

SIR GEORGE.

Next do I prove the seizing of the guards on Russel!

DUKE.

This impossible as the other!—

SIR GEORGE.

Next do I drag the traitor to the block!—

DUKE.

This more impossible than all the rest!—

I fear the people!—

SIR GEORGE.

If the noon-tide sun
Prove me not truest prophet,—off with Jeffries!—
Damn him to deeper midnight of thy frowns!—
I pledge me—and my honour—to my country!—
And yet!—Would'st thou thine oracle attend to,—
If thou hate Russel,—damn him yet to life!—

DUKE.

DUKE.

Hurl him to Tart'rus !—He not lives a moment !—

SIR GEORGE.

Life with such horror teems, that death and hell
Resign all claim to torture !—

DUKE.

Ha !—unfold !—

SIR GEORGE.

This morn,—to render fate more bitter to him,—
Beneath the royal signet, which thou gav'st me,
I issu'd speediest order to the tow'r
That comfort chear the horrors of his prison
'Till morrow's noon-tide sun, when he again,
Basks in life's bright Elysium !—basks in blifs !—
Unclaim'd by law,—nay ev'n ungall'd by trial !—

DUKE.

Thou lov'st thy prince !—

SIR GEORGE.

At such triumphant tidings
London with joy resounded, as when heav'n
Wafted the royal progeny to England !—
The king believes, that loud the people hail
His progress to the tow'r, as if from blifs
In glory some archangel had descended,
Blazing in mortal vision !—Thro' the throng

K

Of

Of London,—empty'd forth of all her nations,—
 I urg'd my way, unheeded, and beheld,—
 While all, like pale suspicion I did peep,—
 Heav'n's blessedness by hell's black horrors
 Blasted!—the father, son, wife, children, torn asunder!

DUKE.

Back to the tower I speed me, where the king,
 With more than Roman triumph, hath arrived!—
 To Jeffries health!—

[*Going.*

SIR GEORGE.

One moment, royal York!—

DUKE.

I bend into attention!—

SIR GEORGE.

Grinding tortures,—
 That mock the wheel, and won't with groans
 Regale thee,—were all Nepenthé to the bitter potion
 Of misery, which from her horn of plenty
 I forc'd, unsparing, down the throat of Ruffel!—

DUKE.

Drank he so deep of hell?—

SIR GEORGE.

So deep, my prince,
 That the fiends,—gorging them on groans of Ruffel,—
 Gorging

Gorging on feast of greater pang, than tear them
'Midst roaring fires,—now cease the howl of horror,
And hold tremendous jubilee in Tart'rus,
For wretchedness unrivall'd by their own!—

DUKE.

Mine ear drinks rapture!—At eve thou in my chambers!—

[*Going.*

SIR GEORGE.

Soon shall the chase, the glorious chase be o'er!—
For black-mouth'd perjury,—all hoarse with
Whooping,—already doth unleash his sceter
Greyhounds—Rumsey and Sheppard,—rivals
Of the wind,—and Howard, all impatience,
Growls, like Cerberus!—to burst his chain
His eye devours, like famine!—

DUKE.

Fortune befriend thee!—To the King I hasten!—

[*Exit.*

Enter LORD HOWARD.

SIR GEORGE.

Tidings from Sidney, Howard?—

LORD HOWARD.

The tow'r with terror

Rocks at the lions roar!—

K 2

SIR

SIR GEORGE.

Then all too narrow
For Cæsar and for Pompey is the globe!—
Pent, like the roaring elements in Ætna,
Jeffries and Sidney in one narrow world!—
Die he, or Jeffries must, and, red with rage,
Shall blaze the funeral pile of Jeffries!—

LORD HOWARD.

Better to die!—such hail of curses smote me,
As hither thro' a world in arms I 'scap'd!—
The villain, Hubert, smote me to the ground,
And vow'd eternal vengeance against Howard!—
Better to die at once, than die for ages!—

SIR GEORGE.

In!—into court—or hell yawns wide for Howard!
[Exit.]

SCENE III.

The KING and DUKE of YORK at the Tower.

KING.

This glorious pile the capitol condemns;
Teeming with thunders, like the stores of heav'n,
To awe a world!—How nobler rolls than Tiber,—
Than Herbus rolls—majestic as a monarch—
Thames,—nature's storehouse, heap'd with wealth

Of

Of worlds!—How vast, how glorious yon majestic sweep
Of London, bending, like heav'n's bow in grandeur!—
The people hail'd our progress to the tower,—
And could we love the murderers of our father!—
The murderers of royalty!—What think'st thou?—

DUKE.

London,—the gorgeous sun of all this world,—
Would rival ev'n heav'n's majestic towers,
Did not black cloud of heresy eclipse
Yon goodly scene!—Firm! firm as fate, my Charles!—

KING.

Ah! James!—should we be honest, and at once
Shake from our hand, like Paul, that viper Rome!—
That viper France!—

Enter an Officer of the Tow'r running across the stage.

DUKE.

Hence at once!—

To the Officer.

Hence to the old Bailey!—Shak'st thou not, my Ruffel?—
Shak'st not his soul with terror?—

[Exit Officer.]

KING.

Caution, James,—

Retire with us,—some matter for thine ear
Of much importance.—Our barge awaits us.

DUKE

[70]

DUKE.

Our barge!—we plough into the stormy ocean,
And on the foaming billows mount to heav'n!—

[Exit.]

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT

ACT V.—SCENE I.

SIDNEY discovered reading.

SIDNEY and LIEUTENANT.

Enter LIEUTENANT.

LIEUTENANT.

LORD HOWARD at the door,—he waits admittance.—

A. SIDNEY.

Then was the golden age—for freedom flourish'd!—
 No Helot—no vile slave in all thy states!—
 Thou ever like England,—ever full-orbed in glory!
 Greece, all-adored by this majestic world!—
 Greece,—Magna Mater,—whose capacious womb
 Teem'd with a race of gods, who polish'd life
 With useful arts, or hurl'd on head of tyrants
 The thunders of Thermopylæ, or blaz'd
 In arms o'er Chæroneia!—Rome, once glorious!—

LIEUTENANT.

Bestir thee—Rouse—Again Lord Howard knocketh.

A. SID-

A. SIDNEY.

Peace ! slave,—Thou pander to a tyrant, peace!—
 Heap all your chains upon me,—plunge me down
 To deeper darknes,—never shall the soul
 Of Sidney crouch beneath a tyrant's frown!
 Not ev'n when nature, on the groaning scaffold,
 In the last pang pale-gasping—

LIEUTENANT.

Into reason

Shall never the full moon of madness wane?—

A. SIDNEY.

Yes!—my soul's nectar is this glorious page,
 Like heav'n, all beaming with immortal splendours;
 For liberty burns bright in ev'ry period!—

LIEUTENANT.

Lord Howard!—

[*Aloud.*

A. SIDNEY.

Kirk, not blast me with his presence!—
 Hurl him,—base parricide,—hurl him to perdition!—

Enter LORD HOWARD.

LORD HOWARD.

Brutus of England—What?—our gallant Sidney—

A. SID.

A SIDNEY.

Hence, good Lieutenant,
Cast forth the slave—He breathes infection o'er me
Like pestilence, all spotted with contagion.

[Exit Lieutenant.]

LORD HOWARD.

Now by the friendly compact which once leagu'd us
I come to thee thy Pylades, my Sidney,
To raise thee higher than e'vn haughty Leicester.

A. SIDNEY.

To England liberty!—to Ruffel life!—
To Howard hell—to York, France, Rome,—perdition!—
To tyrants ruin in the throat of Tart'rus!—
Then, tho' these vile chains eat into my marrow,
I but half-curse ev'n Charles,—nay, not from Howard,—
Like Nature from perdition,—start with horror!—

LORD HOWARD.

Life's harbinger I come.

A. SIDNEY.

From whom?

LORD HOWARD.

From Jeffries.

A. SIDNEY.

Death's harbinger return!—At foot of Sidney
Should Jeffries suppliant cast that awful sceptre,

I.

Which

Which rocks the pillar'd globe, would Sidney stoop
To grasp pollution !—

LORD HOWARD.

Tho' upon the bench
Not Æacus more stern ; yet who, like Jeffries,
Or brightens social life with attic fire,
Or melts, like yearning nature, into tears ?—
Now, Algernon,—heav'n's holy angels witness,—
Nay, truce with passion ;—On this very morn,
Wrung at the piteous tale of thine undoing,
Jeffries, brim-full of sorrow, hung upon me !—

A. SIDNEY.

Could falsehood, tho' ev'n huge as Pelion, choak thee,
Leviathan of liars !—if a moment
Lent thee existence, time and death were perjur'd !—

LORD HOWARD.

Thou, more than cynic, Sidney, to spurn forth
Life, and her satellite of glory—fortune !—

A. SIDNEY.

Life from ungrateful Charles, from whose fell
Heart, I turn'd the dagger's point, that thirsted for
His blood !—But say, if mercy beam from that
World of darkness—the cabal !—why on these free-born
Limbs disgraceful fetters ?—
Why from life's chearful day is Sidney bury'd,
Ev'n as if dungeon'd by the gloomy Turk ?
Why England's noblest chiefs,—heroic Russel,—

Heroic

Heroic Essex,—who disdain'd escape,—
 By murder marked to drown the scaffold
 With nobler blood, than beat in Roman veins?
 What overt-act, like guilt's black ghost, to haunt me?—
 Why then this bold infraction of the law,
 To drag me to commitment, like a traitor?—

LORD HOWARD.

This, and no more—Fate's embassy from Jeffries.—
 If bold ambition, beating in thy veins,
 Like Pompey, scorn a rival,—swear, like Howard,—
 Heap Shaftsb'ry's treasons on the head of Russell!—

A. SIDNEY.

No more, thou Belial!—Soul of godlike Brutus,—
 Thou, thron'd in heav'n o'er all the sacred band
 Of heroes, who once bled for glorious freedom,—
 Burn in this breast, in all thy noon-tide glory!—
 Then should that bloody Jeffries tear mine
 Indignant heart upon the rack of boldest contumely;—
 Should ev'n at sentence of that more than Demon,
 Within, brand me liar!—
 Of inborn magnanimity the lion
 Shall scorn to shake the forest with his roar;—
 Shall scorn the dogs of murder, tho' around him
 They open, deep as Cerberus, for blood;—
 Shall scorn the fatal blow, at which aloud
 Worlds shall resound, as at the fall of nature!—
 Then, then throughout the globe in after ages,

At awful name of all unconquer'd Sidney,—
Like thunders peal that rocks a guilty world,—
Terror shall harrow up the soul of tyrants! —

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Enter the KING and the DUKE of YORK.

DUKE.

Now that the twins of treason, Russel, Essex,
Must sink together to eternal darkness—
Let execution, good, my brother, be
Before the doors of Russel!—

KING.

Savage, unfeeling!—wilt thou, in a moment,
Pull from her fiery throne devouring vengeance,
That piles up her huge hoard of thunders for thee! —

DUKE.

Some other public place then drink his blood!—
For thus Rome o'er these heretics shall triumph,
And terror rock the city, when she sees
Her champion haul'd along to execution!—

Enter BEDFORD.

[*Kneels.*]

Ah! bend o'er pale-ey'd misery that trembles,—
All suppliant trembles,—at thine hallow'd feet!—

KING.

KING.

Away!—his doom is fix'd thou plead'st in vain!—

BEDFORD.

My child doom like Brutus—doom to pangs
Bitterer than death!—For tho' like Blake,
Once more to see his dear, dear native land,
E'er death shall close his eyes,—he never, never,
Shall visit his lov'd England,—never—never
Approach the sacred fire that thus hath scorch'd him!—

KING.

Law hath adjudg'd him Regicide!—No more!—

BEDFORD.

Ev'n tho' an hundred thousand be his ransom!—

KING.

A monarch brib'd 'gainst majesty of law!—
Peru we scorn!—

BEDFORD.

Would'st thou once have spurn'd Bedford?—
Two days at least!—

KING.

Two centuries as soon!—

BEDFORD.

Break not my heart thus!—If I do survive
My gracious creature, I survive myself!—
Survive life's bliss, and live to weeping woe!—

Oh!

Oh ! York,—if I aught read in fate's black volume,—
 In the dark day of future storms,—which beat
 Indignant on the falling throne,—shall James
 Peg Bedford's aid !——
 The life, all-precious, lavish'd now by murder !—

DUKE.

Monarchs with regicides not scorn alliance !——
 [*Turns away from the Earl of Bedford.*]

BEDFORD.

Lead me, like Oedipus, all blind and helpless !—
 For all around me is Egyptian darkness !—
 That,—e're heav'n snatch my darling from my bosom,—
 Once more I may enfold his death-doom'd neck !—
 Once more devour my angel with embraces !—
 Oh ! King, live,—live for ever !—shall I return,—
 And if I prove me traitor,—shall the block
 Drink but my blood !—my child as heav'n is guiltless !—

KING.

Away !—away !——

BEDFORD.

Oh ! misery !—misery !—misery !—
 [*Exit Bedford.*]

Enter LADY RUSSEL, Children and Maid.

Now am I blest'd indeed !—[*meets*] I clasp thy knees !—
 A father's knees !—the father of his country !—
 Close-clung with filial piety, my soul
 To thee, my gracious sovereign, as to heav'n !—

Then,

Then, like her guardian angel, snatch thy Rachel!—
Snatch her—Oh! snatch her from the hell of horror,
Just opening to devour her peace for ever!—

KING.

Rather than thus be stretch'd upon the rack,
Would I again be doom'd to banishment!—

LADY RUSSEL.

Southampton, groaning in his grave, hath sent me!—
His poor orphan, to embrace thy knees!—
The knees of melting mercy!—For in heav'n
He tastes not blessedness, if I be wretched!—
Tears drown mine utterance!—Haply thou not hear'st me!

KING.

Southampton send the wife of Russel hither!—
Thy brain is madness!—Thou do'st rave, fair Rachel!—

LADY RUSSEL.

Southampton sends me hither!—Thy Southampton!—

[Starts up and speaks aloud.]

Thine house's friend, when ev'n by heav'n abandon'd!—
Give me the father of these little creatures,

[Pointing to the Children.]

Who burst by instinct into tears, as I do!—

Fall down, like me, my babes, in adoration!—

[Lady and Children kneel.]

KING.

What would thy madness?—plead'st thou for a traitor?—
Plead'st thou for Russel?—

LADY

LADY RUSSEL.

Yes!—thy heart is goodness!—
 But prejudice misleads thy royal nature!—
 Then bend o'er weeping time, all-gracious sovereign!—
 Oh! father! friend!—bend!—bend o'er weeping time,
 That kneels to thee, as at heav'n's awful throne,
 Imploping short reprieve!—fix little weeks!—

KING.

Grant him six weeks, who, were it in his power,
 Not me would grant six hours!—Ah! woman! woman!
*[Turns away from her, she rises and
 goes over to the Duke of York.]*

LADY RUSSEL.

Not with dry eyes, and with a stony heart,
 Shall York spurn forth his suppliant!—Gracious York,
 Blood of our ancient Kings with time coeval!—
 See me, all shaking at these shrieks of horror!—
 Feel! feel! like mercy, greater pangs, than ever
 Have torn in Fotheringay the royal victim!
 Mary, of Scots, thine ancestor, heav'n's portrait!—
 Bright as the morning star!—all-bright with beauty!—
 She suffer'd but death's pang!—She—

DUKE.

Heard'st thou ever
 Of the exclusion bill?—the Rye-house plot?—
 Seizing the guards?—heard'st thou, at Westminster,
 The royal York presented?—deem'd a felon?—
 Papist?—nay, driv'n abroad, by pale contempt,
 Through,

Through every state in Europe for a traitor?—
 Heard'st thou all this, and plead'st to me for Russel?—

LADY RUSSEL.

Have I, like pale petition, to the dust [Rises.
 Humbled me, a freeborn English woman,—humbled
 The daughter of Southampton to such tyrants?—
 Men claim prerogative!—In England women
 Plead, like Elizabeth, heav'n's equal charter!—
 England than Rome more glorious!—O'er, and o'er
 I scorn ye, tyrants!—scorn ye from my soul!—
 Heav'n!—Heav'n, will hear me!—From this land of
 freedom,

[Throwing herself on her knees.

Sweep!—storming vengeance!—sweep this race of Tar-
 quin!—

O! may some future Russel dash, with thunder,
 Thee and thine hopes,—thou tyrant!—to the dust!—

[To the Duke of York.

And may'st thou from afar,—all-pale with terror,—
 Behold the bold avenger of his country!—
 Avenger of his blood!—some glorious Russel!—

[Rises and exit with her Children.

[Exeunt King and Duke.

M

SCENE

SCENE III.

Enter LORD RUSSEL and a GENTLEMAN.

RUSSEL.

My Cavendish for me immur'd in prison,
And I escape in Cavendish's garment!—
Avert dishonor from the breast of Russel!—
Heav'n wave the banners of thine ardent love
O'er Cavendish,—o'er all the god-like race,—
'Till Devonshire's heroic house with nature,—
With the sun expire!

[Gentleman whispers.

Reserve his Russel!—For the illustrious life
Of Cavendish, my soul would barter worlds!—
Shall Chatsworth's heir then, of life too lavish,
Like Curtius, headlong, plunge into perdition?—
No! let him live, as I must die, for England!—
Greet him—oh! greet him, with my soul's affection!—
All gladly would I meet him in my progress
To martyrdom!—Life's cordial is a friend!—
Swift!—swift!—recall him, for in vain he stuns
The throne with cries of weeping intercession!—

[Exit Gentleman.

Oh! my father!—

[Seeing Bedford.

His eyes are red!—He beats his aged bosom!—
He tears,—in phrenzied agony,—he tears
His silver hairs!—His piteous cries plant daggers
Deep in my heart!—Would savages not weep!—

Enter

Enter BEDFORD.

BEDFORD.

William, my child !—

RUSSEL.

My Father !—

BEDFORD.

Horror !—horror !—

Thou, at whose footstool trembling !—mercy !—mercy !—

Or hurl this hoar head to the gloomy grave

That yawns untimely for my youthful William !—

Then !—then !—the father triumphs o'er the tomb !—

Then !—then !—his bones, as at the trumpet sound,

Leap into life,—and beating all with instinct,—

Burst from their carments to embrace his child !—

As when these arms once rock'd thee !—as when

Heav'n shall give thee all into my soul again !—

My yearning soul, that never more parts from thee !—

RUSSEL.

My Father !—

BEDFORD.

My heart's darling !—On thy bosom

Shall I no longer, as on the down of peace,

Recline this aged head !—nay, now no longer melt,

Like weeping anguish, in thine arms !—Oh ! fatal morn !

Enter HUBERT.

RUSSEL.

My Hubert, this is friendship!—

HUBERT.

Earth's bright angel,
If Howard,—perjur'd Howard—rue not murder
Hideous as thine, what is the faith of mortals?—

Enter LADY RUSSEL, CHILDREN and MAID.

LORD RUSSEL.

What holy angel thou, in Rachel's form,
Thus beaming blifs!—

LADY RUSSEL.

Thine angel bearing comfort!—
Heav'n have I fought in prayer, and Heav'n hath heard me!
That more than magnanimity, inspires
My bosom with ambition, to contend
With fame's first heroines in the lists of glory!—
And thus triumphant spurn upon these tyrants,
As death, inexorable!—Angels wept!—
Fruitless compassion wept upon my woes!—
But now the glories of another world
Open before the rising sun of faith,
Like Heav'n at refurrection of the just!—
Waiting the nod supreme to bound from blifs
For thee, the martyred Stephen, of thy country!—

LORD

LORD RUSSEL.

Next to the sacred symbol of our faith
By Tillitson administer'd—thy voice,—
Sweet as Heav'n's harpings,—cheers me,—and my soul,
Drinks the bright noon of bliss already,—bursting
Through death's drear darkness on thy raptur'd Russel!—

LADY RUSSEL.

Then!—then!—no tear shall stain thy Rachel's cheek
For thee, emerging from this grave, the world,
To bliss unspeakable,—unfading bliss,—
That crowns thee with eternal wreaths of glory!—
No hymn in heav'n!—'Tis solemn silence all,
Till the full chorus of saluting angels,
Hail thine arrival, in life's golden regions!—
Yes! as at grandeur of thy rising sun
The boasted stars of Greece, and Rome have
Vanish'd!—Thine shall behold with equal wonder,
My Russel, hea'v'ns bright orb descend in glory!—

Enter SHERIFF and Attendants.

SHERIFF.

My Lord, the fatal warrant!—

LORD RUSSEL.

I obey it.

HUBERT.

May ruin the tyrants seize!—

LORD

LORD RUSSEL.

May heav'n forgive my murderers,
Ev'n as my soul forgives them !—

BEDFORD.

Whither !—oh ! whither !
Through the world's desert, shall I now betake me,
Bereav'd of thee !—how shelter from the storm
This precious legacy,—thy widow'd angel,
And all her weeping orphans !—

LORD RUSSEL.

Drown me not with thy sorrows, nor unman me,
Plunging from time's bleak barrier into ocean !—
Shoreless eternity, thine awful ocean !—
My wife !—my children !—oh !—but heav'n is ever
The shield of innocence !—

LADY RUSSEL.

Thy blessing pour upon this little head !

LORD RUSSEL.

If virtue ever touch'd thy father's soul,
May she, without his griefs, descend to thee !—
Prophetic was my soul,—
And o'er this vain, vain world, did rise triumphant !—
Calm from fair virtue's region I beheld,
This world with all her clouds and storms
Beneath me !—But now my heart-strings pull me
Back from heav'n !—From choiring angels !—from
A tide of glory !—to cling again to thee,

My

My wife!—my children!—

[Embracing his Wife and Children.]

SHERIFF.

Thy latest sand

Runs rapid down into the waste of time,—

And fate's dread moment drags thee to the grave!

LORD RUSSEL.

Welcome, heav'n's holy mandate!—

[Collecting himself.]

At length the bitterness of death is past!—

Now I have done with time, and henceforth solely,

Must think of vast eternity!—

Oh! my wife! my children!—father!—

Friend!—all!—all!—farewell!—

*[Then looks tenderly at Lady Russel, goes out
follow'd by the Sheriff and his attendants.]*

*At the moment of his exit Lady Russel
falls into the arms of the Duke of Bedford.*

BEDFORD.

Art thou then torn from me, my child!—

My William, art thou gone!—

Support me, Hubert!—Oh!

My torn heart!—

[Falls into Hubert's arms, and is carried off.]

SCENE CLOSES.

Enter

Enter LADY RUSSEL distracted.

HUBERT and Attendants.

LADY RUSSEL.

In my foul's war, the roaring winds are drown'd !—
 No !—Cavendish !—no !—no !—'Twas all chimera !—
 Nature astonish'd, saw me at our parting !—
 Shed I a tear !—But now Vesuvius thunders !—
 Murder !—The bell-tolls death !—
 Off !—If thou hold me,
 Perdition tear thee, as I tear these hairs,

[Tearing her hair.]

And scatter them,—anathema of nature !—
 Thus !—thus !—and thus !—This way I saw him,
 To slaughter led !—His neck upon the block !—
 The villain of hell-glooming eye balls o'er him,
 With axe uplifted !—Murder !—I behold him !—
 Let not these fiends !—drag !—drag !—me down to
 Darknes !—Ah ! York !—be gracious !—
 My Russel's ghost all-bloody !—

[Starts.]

He smiles on me !—

He weeps !—I rush into thy soul, my Russel !—
 'Tis joy !—'tis bliss unspeakable !—
 Cruel !—ah ! cruel Jeffries !—On my knees,
 Tear him not from me !—Oh !—nay then I struggle !—
 Unhand him !—Thou do'st tear mine heart
 In pieces !—Yes !—I so grasp him !—grasp him !—

That

That not fate shall rend him from me !—
 Croak despair and darkness, ye ravens, York
 And Jeffries !—He laughs !—he laughs !—and I
 Laugh louder !—Oh !

[Falls into the arms of her attendants.]

HUBERT.

Heaven melt in pity o'er her angel !—
 And when thou makest inquisition for this blood,—
 This righteous blood,—religious pure libation !—
 Wrest from thine angel, the red bolt of vengeance,
 And midst the ruins of a falling world,—
 Oh ! save thine own Britannia !—From disunion,
 As from black-rolling storms of foreign war,—
 Oh ! save thy sacred island ! And with glory
 Of brighter bliss, thus crown thy martyr'd Russel,
 Who nobler than Greek or Roman fell,
**FOR LIBERTY, OUR CHARTER'D RIGHT FROM
 HEAVEN !**

N EPILOGUE.

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN AND SPOKEN BY MRS. BATHURST, WHO PERFORMED
THE PART OF LADY RUSSEL.

AS one who 'scapes the horrors of a dream,
And hails with grateful yoy the morning beam,
So have I 'scap'd the more than Stygian flood
Of tyrants' scorn, and a lov'd husband's blood ;
Scap'd with delight from dark ideal pain,
To the true blessings of the present reign,
Where every virtue sparkles round the throne,
With native worth and beauty all our own ;
Thus, tho' my vessel was on danger's brink,
Bound for its Cape, good hope, shall never sink.

And let creation's Lords say what they will,
Thank Heaven we have the odds of talking still,
Else how could I, the tragic business over,
So soon the powers of utterance recover ;

Like Milton, cast on evil times and tongues,
 My part required prodigious strength of lungs;
 One lonely female, through five acts to brave,
 On Sorrow's ocean, each tempestuous wave,
 With no kind pilot in the tragic storm,
 Where grief assaulted me in every form,
 Thrown by our Author on that hectic age,
 Of lawless appetite, and bigot rage,
 I freely own, the melancholy part
 Has left a mournful something at my heart,
 A soft regretting languor quite unfit
 For this attempt, where chaste, yet ready wit,
 Should like the light'ning of those radiant eyes,*
 Correct, delight, enliven and surprize.
 Wild are my numbers, and my feelings quick,
 Nor have I yet acquir'd one playhouse trick;
 Yet real Genius will vouchsafe to blend,
 Nay, lose the critic, in the generous friend;
 In friendship's cause, a volunteer I came,
 Intreating pity, yet submits to blame;
 And tho' a stranger to dramatic lore,
 I but presume to tremble on this floor,
 Yet the great motive which inspires my heart,
 Might to a Siddons some new charm impart,
 Extend her Fame, if wider it can spread,

And

* Addressed to the Boxes, which were uncommonly crowded.

And add the fairest laurel to her head;
 Away then Fear, Despondency and Doubt,
 My better angels drive such traitors out,
 Command our labours, and let your desire,
 Forbid that Russel should again expire;
 The dragon Censure's wakeful eye-lids steep,
 Create and lengthen the dread monster's sleep, }
 While we the harvest of his slumbers reap.
 So shall our Author find his honour'd piece,
 By your protection prove a *Golden Fleece*.

F I N I S.

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